

Salvador J. Lopez

Lopez was born in Muscatine, Iowa in 1928 to Antonia and Federico Lopez, two Mexican immigrants. During the Depression, the family moved from Fairport, Iowa, to Cook's Point, where they found a close-knit Mexican community. To earn extra money for themselves or their families, Salvador and the other children of Cook's Point worked in the fields cutting the tops off of onions in nearby Pleasant Valley.

When World War II broke out, Salvador and several of his friends from Cook's Point enlisted in the military. In the Army, Salvador faced prejudice from his fellow soldiers, who did not see him as an equal. Upon his return to Iowa, Salvador hoped to work as a heavy equipment operator with one of the local factories because he had gained experience working with heavy machinery in the Army. Yet despite his experience, the local union refused to issue him a union card. Discriminatory practices on the part of the union meant that Salvador continued to work maintenance on the local railroad. When he applied for higher paying railroad jobs, such as a postal clerk at the freight house, he was turned away.



By then, Salvador was married to Joan Garcia and raising a family, which eventually grew to be 8 children. Since Salvador faced great discrimination, he and a couple of friends decided to co-found an Iowa League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) in his area which was focused on discrimination, politics, and the betterment of the Hispanic community. As a founding member of LULAC, Salvador played a key role in the establishment of a LULAC education scholarship fund for college students, one of LULAC's primary programs. Since 1978, LULAC Council 10 has awarded over \$535,000 in scholarships to 920 QC students entering or enrolled in college.

Additionally, Salvador was part of the Davenport Citizens Advisory Committee (DCAP) assists in the administration of the federal Community Development Block Grant program for the past 10 year, Salvador insured the poor and disenfranchised were being represented as these critical federal dollars were allocated.

While serving on the Center for Active Seniors (CASI) Board Salvador was instrumental in the establishment of a senior Hispanic meal site which provided Mexican meals to the local Latino seniors. It soon became the most popular meal site in Scott County, drawing people of every race and age.

Salvador Lopez has no limits when it comes to participating and enriching the lives of those in Iowa and beyond our borders. Whether it is participating in mission trips to Mexico building medical clinics (2008-09) or orchestrating a BINGO event for earthquake victims of Mexico, Salvador, without fanfare, continues to give. On top of all these accomplishments and despite his own battles with injustices, Salvador continued to serve our country in the National Guard for 25 years.